

CDF NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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First Civil Penalty Settled in Forestry Case

Sacramento - The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) has settled its first civil penalty case for violations of the forest practice rules. "We are sending a clear message to those who log illegally in California," said CDF Director Andrea E. Tuttle. "We are watching closely and will enforce the rules with all the tools available including stiff monetary fines." Several more cases are pending.

Norman Giddings of Crescent City was fined \$12,000.00 for illegally harvesting logs without a timber harvesting plan and without a timber operator's license. Mr. Giddings had previously held a timber operator's license and was familiar with the process and requirements of the forest practice rules.

This is the first of several cases that have been initiated by CDF since the approval of SB 621 by Governor Davis. The bill, which became effective January 1, 2000 and was authored by Senator Byron Sher, allows CDF to levy civil penalties for violations of the Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act and the companion rules adopted by the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Previously, all enforcement action for violations was pursued through the criminal court system. Maximum fines for violations were not always consistent with the high value of timber products removed nor reflective of the "intrinsic" values for damage done to wildlife habitat and watershed values. In addition, the courts often were too busy with violent crimes against people to take up logging violations.

"This action is a significant landmark for enforcement of the forestry rules and demonstrates once again, the Davis Administration's commitment to ensuring that the environment is protected during timber operations", added Director Tuttle.

Mr. Giddings has paid the fine in full.

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